

Module 2

Overview

Module 2 leads you through the planning and organizing you need to do in preparation for writing your grant application. We do this step by exploring some essential and basic questions you must address before you decide to apply for funding:

- Do you have the right personnel to write a competitive grant application?
- Do you have the time to organize and write a competitive grant application?
- Do you have the experience and expertise to make your proposed project work?

Planning and organizing can help you by putting many of the required resources and materials at your fingertips. This step is important because the timeframe for grant application development is limited, usually between 45 and 60 days. With planning and organizing, the process of writing your application will be a great deal easier.

Purpose of Module 2

Module 2 discusses the steps to identify, organize, and update needed project and community information in preparation for deciding whether or not to submit a SAMHSA grant application.

Module 2 Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Identify the core elements needed to develop your Mission Statement;
- Organize and revise existing resources to clarify the decision-making and grant-writing processes and keep them in a notebook;
- Update and revise current project information;
- Identify and describe existing community partnerships, and determine how you can expand your professional networks and incorporate new partners in the application process;
- Identify and use a local advisory committee to provide project guidance and resources; and
- Identify resources for conducting a literature review and needs assessment.

Module 2 Underlying Assumptions

- You already have many of the resources and capabilities you need to write a competitive grant application.
- By assessing your resources, you can decide whether or not now is the time to apply for grant funding or if more planning time is needed.

- Linking with other community groups may help give your project greater credibility.
- Planning will save you time, effort, and energy. This step also can help support a systematic and efficient grant-writing process.

Module 2 Agenda

Topics to be discussed:

- Know your project.
- Create your project notebook.
- Update and revise your project materials.
- Understand the reasons for partnerships and networks.
- Know the importance of building coalitions.
- Work with a local advisory committee.
- Conduct a literature search.
- Plan a community needs assessment.

Know Your Project

Mission Statement:

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| • Who are we? | • How do we do it? |
| • What do we do? | • Where do we do it? |
| • Who do we do it for? | • Why do we do it? |

Your project has a reason for existing called the “mission.” Developing a clear way to describe your mission is essential for your project abstract and narrative, both of which are critical components of your grant application. Before submitting a grant application, you should first develop a Mission Statement for your project to use to explore funding sources and to describe your project to SAMHSA.



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If you already have a Mission Statement, make sure the core elements of your Mission Statement reflect the following:

- The type of organization you are now;
- The types of services you provide;
- The description of your target audience(s);
- Your method for providing these services;
- The location of your organization and where services are provided; and
- Why you are providing these services.

The following are the core parts of a Mission Statement:

- **“Who we are”** is your name and type of organization, such as the ABC Agency for Women, a nonprofit, community-based organization in Chicago.
- **“What we do”** means the services you provide, such as smoking cessation support groups.
- **“Who we do it for”** is your target audience—the people you serve—such as women older than age 21 and their teenage children.
- **“How we do it”** discusses the activities you use, such as workshops, support groups, and public service announcements.
- **“Where we do it”** is the specific geographic area in which you provide services, such as neighborhoods on the Southside of Chicago.
- **“Why we do it”** is the community problem you want to change—your measurable goals and desired outcomes—such as reducing smoking and tobacco use among women older than age 21 and their teenage children.

Sample Mission Statement

Arlington Youth Against Violence, Inc. (AYAVI), is a nonprofit organization that provides youth violence prevention and intervention services for youth, ages 14 to 20, who are economically disadvantaged. AYAVI’s prevention and intervention services include training, education, and community collaboration activities. AYAVI serves the youth of Falls Church, Arlington, Fairfax, and Rosslyn, Virginia, suburban communities.

The project’s goals and desired outcomes include:

- Reduction of violence among youth;
- Training and education on alternatives to violence; and
- Partnering to enhance violence prevention.

In the sample Mission Statement provided above:

- **“Who they are”** is Arlington Youth Against Violence, Inc. (AYAVI), nonprofit organization.
- **“What do they do”** is provide youth violence prevention and intervention services.
- **“Who they do it for”** is youth, ages 14 to 20, who are economically disadvantaged.
- **“How they do it”** is through AYAVI’s prevention and intervention services, including training, education, and community collaboration.
- **“Where they do it”** is in Falls Church, Arlington, Fairfax, and Rosslyn, Virginia, suburban communities.
- **“Why they do it”** is answered by the project’s goals and desired outcomes, which include:
 - Reduction of violence among youth;
 - Training and education on alternatives to violence; and
 - Partnering to enhance violence prevention.

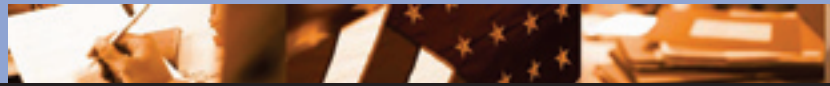
Handout 2-1 provides more information on developing your Mission Statement.

Create Your Project Notebook

- Statement of Need
- Proposed Evidence-Based Service/Practice
- Proposed Implementation Approach
- Staff and Organizational Experience
- Performance Assessment and Data

To organize and revise your existing resources to help you clarify the decision-making and grant-writing processes, create a notebook (using a large three-ring binder and tab dividers) that identifies your project, describes your approach to the project, outlines your management and implementation plan for the project, and describes your methodology for evaluating the impact and success of your project.

When putting together your project notebook, begin by thinking about a problem or need in the community that your project could try to change. These problems or needs should be SAMHSA concerns that the agency is interested in funding. SAMHSA grant announcements for prevention or treatment services usually include the sections mentioned



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above, although they sometimes are titled differently. Your notebook sections should contain the following information:

- **Statement of Need**—Your description of the proposed target group and supporting data about why this group needs services from your proposed project.
- **Proposed Evidence-Based Service/Practice**—The data and information to support your project ideas and activities based on past experience of effective services or practices.
- **Proposed Implementation Approach**—The goals, objectives, and activities you propose for your project.
- **Staff and Organizational Experience**—An explanation of how you will manage the activities, funds, and staff for your proposed project; the past experiences of your organization and proposed staff.
- **Performance Assessment and Data**—An explanation of how you will measure whether or not your project is achieving the goals, objectives, and outcomes you intended to achieve.

Module 5 provides very specific guidance on how to develop each of these sections. Handout 2-2 also provides a list of suggested information to include under each tabbed section.

Update and Revise Your Project Materials

- The information provided in your grant application must be current.
- Before you begin to write your grant application, stay up to date on the topics and on current ways to address them to make sure the information in your application is “state of the art.”
- Use the “Checklist” (Handout 2-3) to remind you of the types of information in your project notebook that need to be updated.
- By using the “Checklist” (Handout 2-3), you can help ensure the information in your grant application is current. By keeping this information current throughout the year, you can reduce the time it takes to prepare the application. Read the questions on the handout.

Consider:

- Does your project go through some kind of site inspection or review? Who inspects or reviews your project? Examples could include funding sources, your State, the Board of Directors, a parent organization, or school representatives.

- Does your project have open houses or invite the community in for special events? If so, what do you do to prepare for this public viewing?

You may have learned from these inspection types of experiences that it is not a good idea to procrastinate or be unprepared. It is the same for writing your grant application.

Remember:

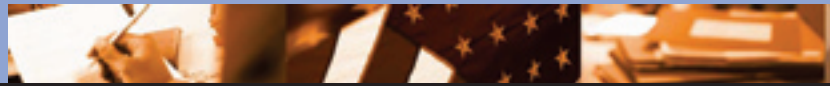
- Grant applications require up-to-date information.
- Updating project materials regularly will help you review your eligibility and preparedness when funding opportunities are announced.
- Once your project materials are updated and revised, you are a step ahead in preparing for the application process.

Understand the Reasons for Partnerships and Networks

While preparing your Mission Statement, organizing the project notebook, and updating your project information, you should devote time and energy to developing and nurturing partnerships and networks. Partnerships are composed of community organizations or groups that associate and collaborate to provide services. Grant announcements often ask you to discuss these relationships to show community understanding and involvement. In addition, you will always have to show cultural competence and responsiveness in all areas of your project. By bonding with diverse groups in your community, you open the door to learning more about all the backgrounds, experiences, and cultures that make up your neighborhoods. Cultural competence is discussed in more detail in Module 5.

Demonstrating working relationships with a variety of groups in your community and the specific project target group greatly enhances your credibility. If you are well known and respected in the community, it may help assure funders that good consumer recruitment and retention for your project will be likely.

Grant applications often require projects to include a sustainability plan. A sustainability plan explains how you expect to keep the project going when Federal funding ends. Partnerships can allow for increased opportunities for alternative funding. Sharing information, resources, and data will give you much-needed background and support for your project ideas—and save you time! Partnerships and networks can serve as forums to share and receive information. Buy-in and validation show that groups in the community respect your project and will support your work.



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Some reasons for building partnerships and networks can include:

- Building project support and sustainability (longer life!);
- Sharing information about your community;
- Sharing resources and data;
- Obtaining buy-in and validation;
- Developing solid public relations;
- Enhancing cultural competence; and
- Encouraging community dialogue at all levels for project design and service delivery.

Respectful public relations are a result of open communication with partners to ensure you are meeting the needs of the target population and establishing a positive reputation as a contributor to the community.

Partnerships and networks can provide staff, stories, data, lessons learned, and feedback to your project to help you design effective services. You need more than a good plan for a community project to work. You need good partners, good listening skills, and investment in the community and in the people you hope to serve.

Know the Importance of Building Coalitions

Building coalitions is important because they provide an organization of relationships with people, programs, and processes that strengthen community resources and move the whole community toward positive social change.

Your project is designed to provide specific services to a specific target group within your community. SAMHSA knows that one project cannot solve all the problems in a community. Individual projects should not try to do everything, but you should connect with many groups, projects, and people in your community to form a larger resource for constructive change.

Coalition building helps bring together all the programs in your community—health, religious, school, social services, housing, and arts, to name a few—to identify how to work together to meet community goals. Your project should contribute to, if not lead, coalition building in your area. Your relationships with other organizations can also demonstrate a “continuum of care,” which is often required in grant announcements.

Work With a Local Advisory Committee

Does your project have an advisory committee? Is it a local committee? If your agency has a *national* advisory committee, it is definitely a useful tool; however, a *local* advisory committee can greatly assist your project with specific tasks that match community needs. It is important that advisory committee members be local residents and familiar with the community. So, put one together now for your project.

A local advisory committee may help with:

- Increasing project status in the community;
- Including assessment expertise;
- Planning project ideas;
- Providing past experience and input in a variety of fields, such as accounting, medicine, research, fundraising and marketing; and
- Recruiting focus group participants and soliciting consumer involvement.

As you describe your organizational structure in your grant application, members of an effective local advisory committee should be listed. If no committee exists right now, you should begin to think about potential members who represent the essential components and needs of your project. Remember to include consumers and consumer family members of the target group who can provide service ideas.

When working with an advisory committee, ask the following questions to assess your committee:

- Does the committee represent the diversity that exists within my community?
- Does the committee have representation from the target population?
- Do committee members have access to resources, expertise, information, or funding sources?
- Does the committee meet on a regular basis?
- Do we take advantage of and learn from committee members' expertise?

Conduct a Literature Search

A literature search helps you find current thinking about the most effective ways to address the needs of your target population. This search is important for sections in your application such as the Proposed Implementation Approach and Proposed Evidence-Based Service/Practice. A literature review entails reading and analyzing the information to tailor it to your project design plans.



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It is an important planning step to take time to become familiar with the current and relevant literature and what various Web sites have to offer. In addition to the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI), 1-877-SAMHSA7 or **www.ncadi.samhsa.gov**, and the National Mental Health Information Center (NMHIC), 1-877-SAMHSA7 or **www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov**, you may access the Substance Abuse Librarians and Information Specialists (SALIS) at **www.salis.org** and the National Library of Medicine's MEDLINE/PubMed at **www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov**. Also, the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP) is a voluntary rating and classification system designed to provide the public with reliable information on the scientific basis and practicality of interventions that prevent and/or treat mental and substance use disorders. Descriptive information and quantitative ratings are provided across several key areas for all interventions reviewed by NREPP. This information is available to the public through a new NREPP Web site launched in March 2007, **www.nrepp.samhsa.gov**.

The size of a literature search can be overwhelming, so begin with existing resources. The trick to conducting a good literature search is to be as specific as possible. Try to list words or phrases that best focus on your project service, target groups, methodology, evaluation plan, or other terms. The literature search will help you demonstrate that your project idea is based on proven practices.

Review Handout 2-4 “Tips for Conducting a Literature Search.”

Plan a Community Needs Assessment

A Community Needs Assessment is an important element in the process of planning your proposed project. Information gathered from conducting a Community Needs Assessment will help you develop sections of the application such as the Statement of Need. The Statement of Need should include a clearly established baseline for the project; that is, it must provide an accurate appraisal of the current situation that you seek to change.

Documentation of need may come from a variety of qualitative and quantitative sources. The following four assessment techniques provide both qualitative and quantitative data: (1) existing data approach, where you would gather and compare national, State, and local information and/or data already collected by individual agencies, State and county public agencies, school systems, health systems, and court systems (e.g., alcohol, tobacco, drug abuse, and mental health data from SAMHSA, **<http://oas.samhsa.gov/>**, SAMHSA's National Survey on Drug Use and Health, **www.oas.samhsa.gov/nsduh.htm** and the National Center for Health Statistics/Centers for Disease Control reports, **www.cdc.gov/nchs/express.htm**); (2) surveys that gather information from a representative sample of your target population (e.g., personal interviews, telephone

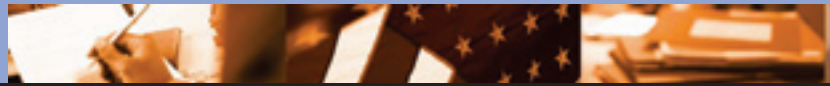
surveys, and face-to-face or mail-in questionnaires); (3) key informant approach, where you identify the community leaders and decision makers who are knowledgeable about the community and can accurately identify priority needs and concerns; and (4) community forum approach, where a public meeting(s) is held during which time the stakeholders discuss the needs facing the community, identify the priority needs, and propose plans for these priority needs. Any technique(s) you choose must reflect an understanding and competence of the cultural aspects that make up your community and target population.

Reading and reviewing current materials written by leaders in the field can help you determine the best strategy for carrying out your project in your area. Community assessments focus on local assets, resources, and activities as well as gaps, barriers, or emerging needs. Understanding your community will help you tailor the selected strategies and activities for your specific project and target group.

Review Handout 2-5 “Tips for Conducting a Community Assessment.”

Summary Points to Remember...

- Planning can help your grant-writing process be more efficient and productive.
- Developing your Mission Statement is essential.
- Your project notebook will be your roadmap to writing a clear grant application.
- The amount of planning, organizing, and preparing you do now will pay dividends when your writing begins later.



Module 2: Handout 2-1

Develop Your Mission Statement

Answer the following questions about your project:

Who are we?

What do we do?

Who do we do it for?

How do we do it?

Where do we do it?

Why do we do it?

SAMPLE Mission Statement

Arlington Youth Against Violence, Inc. (AYAVI), is a nonprofit organization that provides youth violence prevention and intervention services for economically disadvantaged youth, ages 14 to 20. AYAVI's prevention and intervention services include training, education, and community collaboration. AYAVI is based near the Washington, D.C., area, and serves the youth of the Falls Church, Arlington, Fairfax, and Rosslyn, Virginia, communities.

The project's outcomes include:

- Reducing violence among youth
- Providing training and education on alternatives to violence; and
- Partnering to enhance violence prevention.

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Module 2: Handout 2-2

Create Your Project Notebook

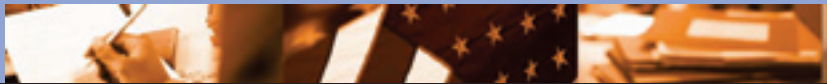
Develop a Project Notebook before you begin writing your grant application. The notebook should be updated constantly with new information and resources. Suggested notebook tabs are described below. The suggested tabs are based on the Services template. Basic suggestions for the type of information to include in the tabbed sections are provided.

Notebook Tab: Statement of Need Suggested Information to Include	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mission• Values• Organizational chart• Board of Directors/Advisory Board information• Board of Directors/Advisory Board meeting minutes• Committee lists• Meeting minutes• Certifications• Facility location/information• Recent contact information (telephone, fax, and e-mail)• Outreach process and methods• Newspaper articles• Flyers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Client contact information• Agency presentations and materials• Community contacts• Partnerships• Stakeholder information• Service agencies• Community groups• Key community liaisons• Community meeting minutes• Key community partners• Local statistics and census data• Noted gaps in services• Data specific to your target group• Letters from partnering groups• Testimonial letters from clients served
Notebook Tab: Evidence-Based Service/Practice Suggested Information to Include	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Purpose• Goals• Objectives• SAMHSA Web site resources explored• Literature search findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Noted expert information• Target population• Service and activity information section justified• Modification justification, from evidence-based information for project



Create Your Project Notebook (Continued)

Notebook Tab: Implementation Approach Suggested Information to Include	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sample consent forms• Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-limited objectives• Outcome objectives• Process objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Product objectives• Consumer focus group reports• Cultural competence materials• Consumer recruitment and retention plans• Literature Review Results
Notebook Tab: Staff and Organizational Experience Suggested Information to Include	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organizational structure• Job descriptions• Resumes of key management personnel• Resumes of key staff relevant to the project• Staff-to-client ratio information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cost of program• Monthly accounts• Recent audits• Facility licensing and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)• Accounting processes and procedures
Notebook Tab: Assessment and Data Suggested Information to Include	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Background articles and data on accomplishments• Relevant articles about the population you serve• Articles that describe your assessment methods and performance measures• Articles that mirror the type of services you provide• Newspaper articles• Statistical information on numbers served	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data collection instruments• Data to support the need for project services• Statistical information on outcomes• GPRA reporting plan*• Contact information for potential assessors in your community (e.g., at the community college) if you do not have program assessment expertise in your agency <p>*The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) data are an essential component of Federal grant programs. GPRA is more fully described in Section V of the Manual, <i>Meeting GPRA Requirements</i>.</p>



Module 2: Handout 2-3

Project Materials Checklist

Use this checklist to ensure that your project materials are updated and revised.

- ☐ Are my job descriptions updated and relevant to the proposed project idea?
- ☐ Are my marketing materials (e.g., brochures, posters, logo, giveaways, and public service announcements) current?
- ☐ Do my committee lists (e.g., volunteer training, fundraising, community liaison, and staff development) have the correct information on them?
- ☐ Are my project and client files complete and standardized? Do they meet compliance standards? Are consent forms in order for current services?
- ☐ Are my meeting minutes (board and staff) updated?
- ☐ Are my certifications, licenses, and inspections updated?
- ☐ Are my facility improvement documents filed and accessible?
- ☐ Is my organizational chart current?
- ☐ Is my budgeting information organized?
- ☐ Do I have possible assessment information tools for performance measurement and indicators for project success?

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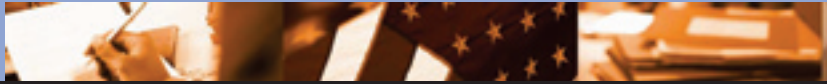


Module 2: Handout 2-4

Tips for Conducting a Literature Search

- Do not wait until the last minute. Start the search now, as part of your planning activities.
- Find authors whose work is cited most frequently. (These are the leaders in the field.)
- Review literature that has been published in the past five years that is considered to be major work.
- Make sure you include literature on the cultural dimensions of the problem(s).
- Use SAMHSA clearinghouses, the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI), 1-877-SAMHSA7 or **www.ncadi.samhsa.gov**, and the National Mental Health Information Center (NMHIC), 1-877-SAMHSA7 or **www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov**. Both offer materials and information on specific topics of interest to help you start and conduct your search. Ask the information specialists for ideas and how best to find what you need. You also can request, for a fee, the use of overnight delivery services such as FedEx, UPS, or U.S. Postal Service, rather than waiting for regular mail.
- Access libraries at local universities or colleges; also access literature online, such as the Substance Abuse Librarians and Information Specialists (SALIS) at **www.salis.org** and the National Library of Medicine's MEDLINE/PubMed at **www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov**.
- Access the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP), **www.nrepp.samhsa.gov**.
- Assign a staff member or student the task of an ongoing literature search and collection of relevant materials for review.

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Module 2: Handout 2-5

Tips for Conducting a Community Assessment

- Meet with State and local health, mental health, and substance abuse offices to obtain State and local data collection reports.
- Go to your local university or college. Ask for free help, and solicit assistance from master's and doctoral degree candidates who are looking for course projects.
- Use existing national, State, and local data.
- On the basis of existing data, develop a strategy for filling in information gaps. Consider representative sample surveys, key informant approaches, and a community forum approach.
- Include both qualitative and quantitative sources in your community assessment.

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